

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 5-7 remain in the application. Claims 9 through 12 had been withdrawn. Claims 4 and 8 had been cancelled. Claims 1 and 5 have been amended without introduction of a new matter.

Claims 1-3 and 5-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 5,882,159 to Müller (the *Müller reference*). The Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 5 to further define the invention as originally claimed and to distinguish over the *Müller reference*. In particular, as amended, a method of forming a sealed female fastener and panel assembly, whereby a bottom wall of the female fastener defines *anti-rotation features extending from the bottom wall and spaced from inclined side walls* of the female fastener wherein the panel is *deformed against the bottom wall to conform to the shape of the anti-rotation features* to prevent rotation of the female fastener on the panel.

The anti-rotation features, such as circumferentially spaced arcuate protrusions 48 extend from the bottom wall 34 and spaced from the inclined side walls 36 and 38 of the female fastener 20, as shown in Figure 1 and supported by the specification as originally filed by the Applicant. The panel 52 is deformed against the bottom wall 34 to conform to the shape of the anti-rotation arcuate protrusions 48, i.e. being packed between the arcuate protrusions 48 and the side walls 36 and 38 and the bottom wall 34 to prevent rotation of the female fastener 20 on the panel 52. The anti-rotation arcuate protrusions 48 of the present invention help to facilitate the deformation of the panel portion radially outwardly beneath the inclined outer side wall 36.

Contrary to the Applicant's invention, the *Müller reference* discloses a fastener (10) having noses or webs (164, 166), each of which are located at the inner and outer wall of the annular groove (18, 118, 218) thereby creating inconsistencies as the panel (16) is assembled with the fastener (10). The inconsistencies are formed at the sealing joint between the panel (16) and the fastener (10), because the webs (164, 166) reduce, and even prevent deforming the panel

portion radially outwardly beneath the inclined outer side wall of the annular groove.

Applicant respectfully submits that the amended claims in associated arguments set forth above place the present application in a condition for allowance and such allowance is respectfully solicited.

If there are any additional fees due, the Commissioner is authorized to charge our Deposit Account for those additional fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: August 27, 2007